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By George H. Calvert

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A NATION'S BIRTH

AND OTHER

NATIONAL POEMS.

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A NATION'S BIRTH

AND OTHER

NATIONAL POEMS.

BY

GEORGE H. CALVERT.

BOSTON:
LEE AND SHEPARD.
1876.

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G. H. Calvert

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A NATION'S BIRTH	7
BUNKER HILL	31
SOMERS, WADSWORTH, ISRAEL	36
REUBEN JAMES	46
WASHINGTON	48

A NATION'S BIRTH.

JULY THE FOURTH, 1776.

With untried deeper rhythm, —
As for a holier chrism, —
Sea-choruses along
The Atlantic coast sang their resounding song,
The unwonted fugue by tides
Borne inland to the hills,
Whose hearkening savage sides
Quiver to feel the strain that thrills
Broad air with new prophetic flood.
Lone Niagára, in his agéd solitude,
Catching the robust sound,
Shouted such thunderous shout
His neighbor seas and wakened wilderness

Shook to the core, the shout's rebound
Making the wisest stars look out
By day, with their best light to bless
The splendid prophecy.
Onward with the happy Sun
Swept the warm fluent symphony,
Mingling at noon
Its martial tune
With Mississippi's giant run
(Who paused in joy to listen);
Then westward sped to where
Nevada's virgin summits glisten
In vast Pacific's glare.
The placid Ocean, her great sister's roar
Quick answering, with calm upheaval smote
The sleeping golden shore,
Echoing Atlantic's jubilant note;
For she well knew, that tone the birth-throes meant
Of a new Empire on their sunny Continent.

Deep nature feels with deeper man,
Attuned to helpfullest accord
When first creative breathings here began
Their endless work and sacred word.
The invisible circumambient air
Feeds with its finest food the soul,
And from sidereal reaches brings
More heavenly visitings
When nobler aspirations bear
Upward men's thought and a stout will control.
And now the manful race,
Who close behind tempestuous capes
Had built self-governed tenures, brace
Brave hearts 'gainst usurpation, that aye gapes
For more. From Hampshire's mountain fields
To Georgia's hot alluvial plains,
Where'er soil, tree, or river yields

Fruit to industrious foresight's pains,
Farms, hamlets, cities, towns upgrew,
Mastered by men who from dear England drew
Their wishes, principles; who brought
Much freedom with them, seeking more;
So that, when England's arrogant King distraught,
With his dull oligarchic tools would gore
This loyal people with sharp tyrannies,
Uneasy motions mounted by degrees
From silent deeps to uttered wrath,
Until to some the bloody path
Of war yawned on the vision. South and North, —
In those first days there was no West, —
Empowered men, their wisest, best,
In solemn Congress to deliberate;
From whom such words and acts went forth,
That Chatham to them tribute paid,

And from his peerless station said,
In History they have no mate.
To that august Assembly give
Thanks upon thanks from age to age,
Yet, long as on this Continent shall live
Men of our race, they will not disengage
Their being from its living debt to them.
In the conned annals of the breeds
Who wrought for right by word and deeds,
Each one will shine a beckoning gem.
The spirit that will not brook the wrong,
That was the pith that made them strong.
And one there was, the very symbol clear
Of this hale spirit, wise
Even above each great compeer,
A man from whose blue deepening eyes
Looked soul so human, so benign,
Men felt his presence as a breath divine,
A light whereby their souls could see,
Inspiriting warmth to chilled humanity.

Not yet full known, more felt
Than valued, in him dwelt,
Yet latent to himself, the powers
That were to blaze o'er darkest hours
A flame of might, a star
Potent to rule the waywardness of war.
And now came couriers breathless, pale,
Sped from the North by battle's wail;
And in and out of Boston stood
Defiant armies, their hot blood
By mutual slaughter chafed to infuriate mood.
The Congress oped its arms and made its own
The host that had so boldly thrown
Its bloody gauntlet in the teeth
Of Britain's power. The sheath
Of peace was flung away. And then,
In that great clan of men,
All looks were turned to him,

By no self-seeking stained,
Sole leader, preordained
To vast achievement, dim
As yet even to the scope
Of largest earthliest hope.
With earnest unanimity
The high Assembly named
Him who for young supremacy
In arms was early in Virginia famed.
Then he, as fast as horse could speed,
Rode eager to the post decreed.
And when the ranks in Cambridge their new chief
Beheld, upwent a myriad-throated shout
That shattered sheer the veil of doubt:
His mien majestic gendered quick belief,
As 'neath the Elm he calmly took command
O'er all the forces of th' embattled land.
And when that sacred sword flashed in the Sun

For us, a liberating power was won,
For History, the name of Washington.
Now Order by the throat rude Chaos caught,
And stern Obedience to loose Licence taught
The fruitful laws of discipline.
Then mattock, shovel, pick, and spade
So wrought at fort and palisade,
The foe was daily more pent in.
Through all one night of early spring
With thundering echo fell,
From the wide hurried ring
Of forts, ball, bomb, and shell
Upon the leaguered foe,
Puzzled not long to know
What meant this deafening night's
Unresting cannonade;
For on the impending heights
Of Dorchester shovel and spade
Had in those few noise-shielded hours

Built battlement that lowers
So deadly on army, fleet, that in dismay
The foe his legions pressed aboard, and sailed away.

From rescued Boston toward the South,
To Hudson's affluent mouth
The Chieftain sped,
In time to meet
The foeman, thither fled,
Borne by his puissant fleet.
And now began those great retreats, —
Tokens of his high mastership, —
Which the outnumbering war-trained enemy
Outwore, and, spite of manifold defeats
And gashing strokes on thigh and hip,
Upstored for us the final victory.

Whilst in New York the Chief was compassed round
With risks, from Philadelphia came a sound
Ne'er heard before

All the world o'er,
Shout for a Nation's birth!
Then through the Peoples of the earth
Shot a new thrill,
And a new will
Waked, with an earthquake heave,
In the drugged consciousness of man.
Then all who sorely grieve
Beneath compulsive sway
Smiled fiercely, as from mount to valley ran
The auroral tidings of that holy day.
Vast spectacle sublime!
Unseen on all the rearward heights of time!
A State deliberately self-created,
A Nation born of highest principles, born
Of inward, manful, moral need,
Upreared from feeling into deed,
On that blest July morn,
For aye to freedom consecrated.
Out of itself a people drew

Its government anew.
Of History's highest they the peers
Those fifty-six who signed as one,
Tutelary pioneers
Those few who seized a safety for the whole, —
By magnitude of soul
Creators, Poets, gifted Seers,
Through the rhythm of lofty deeds,
In holy unison
With the singing of the Spheres, —
Prophets who sowed so wisely deep, their seeds
Keep coming up for aye
In luminous display,
In broadening benefaction;
So freshly sound their action,
Their doings live in all the best we do:
From them our privileged possessings, —

A glorious past and freedom to be true.
May we still have their blessings.
While this strong band, in that ascendant hour,
On its vast orbit hurled
Portentous Empire, a new Power
Among the Nations of the world,
And to the glad caressing blast
A maiden banner cast
With sane audacity,
Their chosen martial Leader, where was he?
Driven from stand to stand
By foes swarming on shore and sea
Outnumbering far
In men and the armory of war
His raw command;
Almost surrounded,
His flanks and rear
By boats of foemen bounded,

And, fearful thought! himself to death so near;
For, galloping, at cannon's call,
He met a squadron flying:
Enraged at such a fall
From duty, fear's disgrace,
He snapt his pistols in their face,
Struck at them with his sword, and crying
"Am I to save America with these?"
In his wild anger sprang to throw
Himself single upon the advancing foe, —
His bright soul for a moment dimmed by honor's wrath, —
Had not been by an aide to seize
His horse and wheel him from the deathful path.
His wonted calm he soon regained,
To guard, like growling lion foiled,
The panic-stricken fugitives, he pained
To the soul that they had so ingloriously recoiled.

Still reinforced, the foe
Drove him across the Hudson, slow,
With his lion's heart, to turn his back,
Except to save the cause. Ever on the rack
Himself, as man, as General, he still kept
The courage up of all; and now he wept
As tenderest child, to see
The heroic garrison
Of fortress Washington
Butchered before his eyes incapably.
Nothing was left but flight
Through Jersey's plains: he had no means
to fight.
Mistrust, desertion, treason, blind despair
Within, poisoning the general air,
Exultant enemies without,
Sure clutching at his total rout,
His country's and his doom
Seemed swift impending. 'Mid the gloom
The shaken land that palled

He stood staunch, hopeful, unappalled,
His steadfast soul a light
To warn his country to its right.
While proud oppressors everywhere
Joyed like lean tiger leaping from his lair,
And the oppressed still deeper groaned,
Feeling their chains already bind
More tightly, he sat throned
On faith in good and his unconquerable
mind.
Pursued to Delaware's low banks,
He passed with thinned and sickly ranks,
His army to a handful dwindled,
Almost extinct the fire so late enkindled.
When winter's gloom had deepened night,
And the half-conquered land had chilled
With thoughts the colder for its plight,
And pulse of hope was nearly stilled,
And every patriotic eye
Drooped with despondency,

Washington the rough river crossed
At midnight, his full boats betossed
In ice ; and through a storm of snow
Struck unexpected blow
That made their legions reel ;
Repassed the flood, with keel
Deeper for a thousand prisoners,
Startling the lifted land, that stirs
Once more with hope ; and then,
Hardly time given to rest his men,
The freezing Delaware recrossed
To front at Trenton confident Cornwallis,
Who exclaimed at evening, " Now he 's lost,
He 's mine to-morrow." Of that solace
The British Chief was cheated.
For, roused by distant cannon's boom,
That told his rear would be defeated,
He looked, to see the room,
Filled in the evening by our camp,
Deserted, bare, our squadrons gone,

Unheard their stealthy tramp.
'T was a great day for us and Washington,
That morning fight at Princeton.
The first line checked and driven back,
His drawn sword gleaming,
His eyes war-lightnings beaming,
He led them to a fresh attack,
Waving and calling to the charge:
Himself on battle's hottest marge
A moment veiled by smoke,
He emerged victor by personal daring,
By his inspiring mien and bearing,
By bold strategic stroke,
Courage with wisdom blent.
Well might great Frederick send a sword,
Magnanimously enfurled
In this significant word,
"From Europe's oldest General sent
To the greatest in the world."
England, America, at length

Began to feel the single strength
Of this upmounting man.
The worst birth-throes were past.
The foe — he stood aghast
To see shattered his fostered plan.
But still must we smart at defeats,
Still mourn rude sufferings, checks, retreats;
At Brandywine, at Germantown,
Again confront war's bloody frown;
And shiver then at Valley Forge,
Where, as in Alpine gorge,
Winter's impetuous blasts
Their anger at our warriors dart,
Half clad, half fed at their repasts;
Only their souls warmed by their Chief's great heart.
From Philadelphia's nest Clinton flew North.
Tracking him on his way, sped forth
The aye watchful Washington, who struck

At Monmouth staggering blow;
Then, careworn, soon could comfort pluck
From the advent of Count Rochambeau
From France, bringing most timely generous aid,
The which with thanks can never be o'er-paid.
To the far South, now sorely prest,
The Chief despatched his trustiest, best
Lieutenant, Greene; worthy to be
Second to such a first was he.
Then after him the gallant Lafayette,
Our noble friend, and who not yet
Hath had his meed of statue, but whose name
Will ever sparkle with this unique fame,
That he was as a son
Beloved of Washington.
And now the Chief, with practised martial ken,

Planned from afar
The climax of the war,
Shaping each angle of the pen
Whereinto was Cornwallis driven ;
And the last link of chains,
That bound us to the pains
Of weak dependence, riven.
Once more he crossed the Delaware.
Britain, beware !
'T is the last time
The man sublime
Will pass in panoply of war.
His soul is now in arms
Burning fierce War to push
From his black throne, and hush
His dread alarms.
Europe, America, hung on that march :
All knew him then the keystone of the arch.
His soldiers were bronzed veterans now ;
The officers tried heroes, who

To patriotism had made a vow;
Martyrs if need be, prompt to woo
Danger where dangers most abound;
Men who went earnest forth to found
A great Republic for the Ages,
Fame, consciousness of duty their high wages.
This dear exalted band,
To whom we owe our land,
Our privilege to do the right,
Our deepest fountains of delight,
Looked to their Chief with reverence
And love, with confidence
Illimitable. In the camp,
The field, he was their lamp
Of safety. From within, this modest man
Earned his high place of foremost in the van.
A primal goodness in his nature turned
His wheels of action, either when he burned
With wrath or calmly for the better yearned.

'T was a large heart's soft throb that warmly swelled
His being to its clean, symmetric, great
Proportions. Men loved him because there welled
Within himself such love it made his state
An hourly benediction. 'T was the weight
Of character that gave his look its power.
Those who came near him put religious trust
In his plain speech, that braced them strong and quelled
All discontent and fear. He was so just
His will became the measure of the true;
And angels seemed to second it and strew
Quick lights along his darknesses, a shower
Of guidance, as they held him for a mate:
With high superiorities so rife,
He came to be the soul of a new Nation's life,
The ideal man for a whole People's lead,

Beacon whereby the true and pure to read;
A man whose life had this transcendant beauty,
'T was all and ever subject unto duty.
On the great march he to Mount Vernon came.
Six stormful years had died since, without name,
A simple country gentleman, in story
Unknown, he left it. He returned, a glory
To the land, his country's father, and a light
Forever in his country's sight.
Short time he tarried, but with guests
Illustrious rode onward to where
The foe still gleams in arms, and rests
Hopeful of help, which 't is the care
Of Washington shall not be given.
At last the British chieftain, who had striven
Bravely 'gainst skill and fate, reluctant yields.

Then on war-wounded fields
The Angel Peace poured his strong balm,
And sudden rapturous calm
Smoothed, like a smiling slumber,
The ruffled feverish land, and number
Of fleetest couriers bore from side to side
The mighty news. Late in the night
They stirred the city watch, who all alight
Strode quick, and cried
From block to block,
Glad citizens to waken,
"Past two o'clock!
Cornwallis is taken."

BUNKER HILL.

"Not yet, not yet; steady, steady!"
On came the foe, in even line:
Nearer and nearer to thrice paces nine.
We looked into their eyes. "Ready!"
A sheet of flame! A roll of death!
They fell by scores; we held our breath!
Then nearer still they came;
Another sheet of flame!
And brave men fled who never fled before.
Immortal fight!
Foreshadowing flight
Back to the astounded shore.

Quickly they rallied, reinforced.
Mid louder roar of ship's artillery,

And bursting bombs and whistling musketry
And shouts and groans, anear, afar,
All the new din of dreadful war,
Through their broad bosoms calmly coursed
The blood of those stout farmers, aiming
For freedom, manhood's birthrights claiming.

Onward once more they came:
Another sheet of deathful flame!
Another and another still:
They broke, they fled:
Again they sped
Down the green, bloody hill.

Howe, Burgoyne, Clinton, Gage,
Stormed with commanders' rage.
Into each emptied barge
They crowd fresh men for a new charge

Up that great hill.
Again their gallant blood we spill:
That volley was the last:
Our powder failed.
On three sides fast
The foe pressed in; nor quailed
A man. Their barrels empty, with musket-stocks
They fought, and gave death-dealing knocks,
Till Prescott ordered the retreat.
Then Warren fell; and, through a leaden sleet,
From Bunker Hill and Breed,
Stark, Putnam, Pomeroy, Knowlton, Read
Led off the remnant of those heroes true,
The foe too shattered to pursue.
The ground they gained; but we
The victory.

The tidings of that chosen band
Flowed in a wave of power
Over the shaken, anxious land,
To men, to man, a sudden dower.
From that staunch, beaming hour
History took a fresh higher start;
And when the speeding messenger, that bare
The news that strengthened every heart,
Met near the Delaware
Riding to take command,
The leader, who had just been named,
Who was to be so famed,
The steadfast, earnest Washington
With hand uplifted cries,
His great soul flashing to his eyes,
"Our liberties are safe; the cause is won."

A thankful look he cast to heaven, and then
His steed he spurred, in haste to lead such noble men.

NEWPORT, R. I., *June 8th*, 1875.

SOMERS, WADSWORTH, ISRAEL.

SCENE BEFORE TRIPOLI.[1]

A ROSIER flood of golden light,
A livelier pulse of melody,
Tell of a new supreme delight
For Heaven's endless jubilee.
Joys none of finer holier birth
Hath Heaven, than manly deeds on earth.
Swift now the fire-eyed host
Of warriors quit their post,
And gathering,
Vast lucent ring,
On the deep earthward bound of their blest home,
Shine like a throbbing luminous dome.

[1] See Cooper's *Naval History of the United States.*

Soul's subtlest lightning
That army brightening,
Sparkled their glad emotion,
Like moon-enlightened ocean.
A myriad host they mustered,
In song-wove circles clustered,
Of every age and strand.
He who had sought
The martyr's death;
He who had wrought,
With gushing breath,
To build his fatherland;
He whose faint ear,
On battle-fields lying,
Freedom's great cheer
Had blest in his dying;
He whom the might
Of duty had lifted,
With front upright,
By war to be rifted;

The hearted ones, whose deaths have been
The births of deathless thoughts in men.
With jocund flight, they sped
Towards Afric's shore, where, spread
On the black level of a sunless sea,
Columbia's fleet, afront of Tripoli.
They gather round one slender bark,
They smile upon her starry banner;
Her deadly cargo calmly mark,
And as the men who are to man her
Each freely comes with noiseless will,
A swifter wave of holy light
Pulsed through the angelic host a thrill,
That flamed them more unearthly bright.

Hushed is the fleet; a fearful deed 's to do.
All hearts are with that bark and her calm crew.
A low "God bless you!" seizure of the hand, —

A manly, tender look, — and the choice band
Have parted from their comrades. Fare ye well,
Ye brave, with SOMERS, WADSWORTH, ISRAEL!
Steadfast and silent takes his station each:
Only who stay are moved. With warning speech,
Decatur, who for self ne'er danger spied,
Greets Somers; and stout Preble's bosom sighed,
As from his eye quick glided in the gloom
The death-stored vessel, onward to her doom.

Through the dark majestic night,
Forth she slid like voiceless sprite.
On her deck, so silent, cheerless,
Thirteen hearts beat free and fearless.
Friends were behind them, foes before;

Round and under,
War's black thunder
Slept till a spark should wake its roar.
But Heaven smiled through stars above;
And deep within
Each heart's strong rim
Glowed the clear fire of country's love.
Hushed deeper is the fleet. All eyes are one;
All fastened to the lone "Intrepid's" path.
The wind is gauged, the time 't will take to run
To the Turk's cruisers, where will burst her wrath.
The bold bark's desperate goal she 'll quickly gain;
The scene fore-paints itself on the strung brain: —
See SOMERS stand,
With fire in hand;

His comrades ready,
No nerve unsteady:
The match is lighted;
The crew, unfrighted,
(Naught of earth could shake them,)
To the boats betake them, —
Harshly is rent this hopeful dream.
Forth from the Moslem fort a stream
Gushes of flame, then quick the ear
Is stricken by the cannoneer.
Stream upon stream; with each a mate
Of thunder on the air doth grate.
Is broke this hot suspense
By what o'erwhelmed the sense.
One flash, as though all light were spent!
One crash, as though a sphere were rent!
Trembled the wars-men to their keels;
Glared the dark sea, as thing that feels.
By that appalling light, each saw
His neighbor's visage blanched with awe.

The air collapsed, as though a wrench
Were made Earth's very life to quench.
Silence and Night, as fraught with general death,
Rush back, while Turk and Christian hold their daunted breath.

More slowly than when Ocean's homeward way
Is balked with calms, drag on the minutes now.
Keener than the fierce famished shark for prey,
Watches each silent ship from stern to prow.

Save when impetuous fancy cheats the hope
With semblances of sound, nor eye nor ear
Can seize on aught within their tensest scope.
As hours wear sadly on, night grows more drear.

Close to the water's edge the seamen creep,
Striving to catch the stroke of muffled oar.
The hands that should have pulled them, on the deep,
Where Courage keeps his state, will pull no more.

Gleams the high rocket; booms the signal gun,
Calling to SOMERS, WADSWORTH, ISRAEL.
The heavenward gleam points to the path they 've gone;
The cannon's helpful roar, — it is their knell.

None came to say, how died th' heroic band;
And Death and Night the fearful secret kept.

Shrieked mothers, sisters, wives, as from that strand
Reached the dread tale, and a whole nation wept.

Gay as blossoms breeze-borne dancing,
Heavenward flew th' angelic host,
Swift as sunbeams earthward glancing,
Back to their empyreal post.

E'er that glare the fleet that daunted
Quick was swallowed by the night,
They their song of triumph chanted
Near th' eternal realms of light.

Linked in wreaths 'round heaven's portal,
With the lightsome grace of joy,
Hung that shining host immortal,
Heirs of bliss without alloy.

Backward then their vision darting,
In the nether darkness met,
Just from earth fresh upward starting,
What seemed stars in circle set.

Upward, upward, surely steering,
Sparkling with perennial ray,
Thirteen heroes free careering
Upward to the heavenly day.

Now they near the blissful portal,
Brightening still as they advance;
Now the exultant host immortal
Circle them with choral dance,

Circle them transfigured, gleaming
With their action's holy spell,
Chief among them, raptured beaming,
Somers, Wadsworth, Israel.

1846.

REUBEN JAMES.[1]

On the deck, blood-soiled,
In a death-grip coiled,
The captains lay;
Decatur up, — below, the Turk.
Fierce round them play
The Christian sword and Moslem dirk.
Above the hero's head
A scymetar keen flashes;
An instant more, he 's sped:
Down the sharp weapon dashes.
To ward the blow,
To seize the foe,
Nor arm nor sword is there; by stands
But one poor tar, maimed in both hands.
Down sweeps the Turkish glave, —

[1] See Cooper's *Naval History*.

Decatur naught can save.
What cannot a brave heart?
That tar, with a quick start,
Thrusts his young head between:
It takes the steel's deep seam.
'T was for a hero by a hero done:
Both must be great that deed so great be won.
Higher among heroic names
Stands thenceforth none than Reuben James.

1846.

WASHINGTON.

I.

THE RIVER.

THE wooded banks are silent each to each,
Far sundered as by rounding lake;
To grasp the tideful flood's ambitious reach
The heavens a dim horizon make:
Fitly these woven grandeurs feed
Moods which a mighty presence here doth breed.

The fires of spring are kindled on the shores:
Cherry and dogwood flame in white;
Blossoms in green the life from sassafras cores;
But warmest is the redbud's light:
To each a deeper glow results
From his soul's heat who ruleth now my pulse.

Its hungry flanks the cork-buoyed seine
spreads wide;
The boatman's call is heard afar;
The distant craft like friendly spectres glide;
But all to me transfigured are:
For over all himself impends;
To each his worth benignant blessing lends.

Potomac! great thou art from thy great
flood;
Greater as seat of empire vast;
But greatest, that thy breezes nursed the
blood
Of him, the foremost of the past;
For whom aye sacred shalt thou be,
With Avon, Tibur, holiest Galilee.

II.

THE SALUTE.

Once more in hardy conflict met
The mother proud and daughter bold,
To slay and mangle, fright and fret, —
A quarrel that was new and old.

For England, rankling with the past,
And angered at our forward port,
Insult and taunt upon us cast,
Which first awakened no retort;

For ours are arms of puissant peace,
The axe than sword we rather wield,
And take our joy in sure increase
By thoughtful work in shop and field

But England pushed her will so far,
She threatened very freedom's life:

Then flung we loose the flag of war,
And leapt resolved into the strife;

Where unknit thews such buffets dealt,
The unshaken giant heaved with groans,
And England, startled, bodeful felt
More than her marrow in our bones.

That through the Capital was heard
A foeman's drum, to us was shame;
Deeper to England, that she blurred
Such conquest with malignant flame.

By light of flaring roofs in haste
Her prows and banners seaward turned;
And on Potomac's broadening waste
A frigate's signals fearless burned.

Descending, she with proud disdain
Anchored abreast a threatening fort;

Then stormy poured her iron rain,
That shook the shores with far report.

The fort's resistance quickly slept:
Dark scornful, on her downward path
Again the frigate silent swept;
Wrath that she could not slake her wrath.

Summer still warmed the autumn wind,
And verdure shared with reddening tints
The leafy wealth, and breezes kind
Shook on the water tenderest prints,

As with her shade that westward swept,
With spars and masts sail-crested all,
The frowning frigate mutely crept,
Like goblin through a festival.

"Whose house stands there?" — And he, thus asked,

Answered, "Mount Vernon." By the name
The Captain's recollection tasked —
"The home of Washington?" "The same."

"And lies he buried there?" The words
Stooped, laden with emotion's load.
"Beneath those trees, where hymn the birds,
There is the body's still abode."

His eyes grew deeper. By degrees,
As one with vast imaginings
Possest, who in high distance sees
Resplendent forms of palmy things,

An earnest joy perfused his face:
Unconsciously his cap he raised
With a religious knightly grace,
As, inward wrought, afar he gazed.

"Beat to quarters." The order flew
Swift to the hot pugnacious drum,
At whose loved voice upsprang the crew,
Thinking another fight was come.

But soon 't was whispered 'mong the men,
When each stood braced beside his gun,
That death was not their duty then,
But calm salute to Washington.

By the strong cannon's measured speech
Was tamed the roughness of their pride,
As wrinkles on a wintry beach
By sounding blows from landward tide.

And when had passed the smoke away
Passed too was hate and scorn and wrath:
Within her breast for night was day,
As swam the frigate down her path.

His holy strength had conquered strife,
  Subduing hearts so stout and brave:
A mighty conqueror in his life,
  A mightier is he in his grave.

III.

TRIBUTE.

Sublimer man than ever threw
  To eager Time a virgin name, —
So greatly pure it quickly grew
  The wisest monitor of fame;

A nation's breath is breath of thine,
  Commingled at each human birth:
Of our vast freedom's life the wine
  Is draughts from thy deep manly worth.

The robust beauty of one life
  Tingles in each unfolding heart,

A strength forever in the strife
Of right 'gainst wrong's compulsive art.

Sublimest man of all the years,
The years are proud to walk with thee:
On Time's hoar brow thy greatness rears
His crown of lordliest majesty.

1858.